



TREASURE

OUR

texas

COASTS

and

ESTUARIES

miles of coastline
3,667

coastal population in 2000
5,211,014

fy03 czma core (section 306)
funding
\$2,000,000

fy03 czma enhancements
(section 309) funding
\$540,000

fy03 coastal nonpoint
implementation
\$325,000

fy03 proposed national estuarine
research reserve
\$50,000

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HE TEXAS COAST IS ONE OF THE MOST BIOLOGICALLY RICH AND ECOLOGICALLY DIVERSE REGIONS OF THE STATE. COASTAL HABITATS INCLUDE BARRIER ISLANDS AND PENINSULAS, SHALLOW BAYS AND LAGOONS, MARSHES AND TIDAL FLATS, FORESTED AREAS, FERTILE COASTAL PRAIRIES, AND SEMI-ARID BUSH COUNTRY. MORE THAN ONE-THIRD OF TEXAS' POPULATION AND 70 PERCENT OF ITS ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ARE LOCATED WITHIN 100 MILES OF THE TEXAS COASTLINE. THE TEXAS COAST HOUSES HALF THE NATION'S PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRY AND MORE THAN A QUARTER OF ITS REFINING CAPACITY. STEADY GROWTH OF THESE INDUSTRIES, AS WELL AS BURGEONING MARINE COMMERCE, AGRICULTURE, COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FISHING, AND A THRIVING TOURIST TRADE, HAS INTENSIFIED COMPETITION FOR COASTAL RESOURCES. THE GULF SHORELINE AND BAY SHORES ARE ERODING AT AN AVERAGE RATE OF SIX FEET PER YEAR.

THE COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT (CZMA) PROVIDES THE FRAMEWORK NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN THE ECONOMIC AND ECOLOGICAL VALUE OF TEXAS'S COASTAL AREAS. THIS LAW, WHICH IS ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA), RECOGNIZES A NATIONAL INTEREST IN OUR COASTAL AND OCEAN AREAS. IT ALLOWS STATES AND TERRITORIES, NOT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, TO DETERMINE HOW BEST TO BALANCE CONSERVATION OF THE COASTAL ENVIRONMENT WITH HUMAN USES THAT DEPEND ON COASTAL RESOURCES.

THE CZMA IN TEXAS

The CZMA establishes two programs to balance the use and protection of America's coasts. The Coastal Management Program gives states a flexible framework to address a broad range of community development, economic, and natural resource issues at the state and local level. The National Estuarine Research Reserve System protects key coastal areas for long-term scientific study, education, and resource stewardship.



Texas Coastal Management Program

Approved: 1997

Lead Agency: Texas Coastal Coordination Council

The Texas Coastal Management Program is a networked program of state-level authorities administered by the Texas Coastal Coordination Council. The program fosters interagency communication and cooperation on matters affecting coastal natural resources.

The Texas General Land Office provides staff assistance to the council, which has adopted uniform goals and policies to guide decisions affecting coastal natural resources. The Texas Coastal Management Program applies to portions of eighteen coastal counties and addresses issues such as dredging, erosion, beach access, wetlands, and dune protection.

The CZMA allows the Council to review federal activities, permitting, and other authorizations to ensure they are consistent with the goals and policies of the Texas Coastal Management Program. For example, the Galveston District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issues permits for the fill of U.S. waters and maintains 770 miles of commercially navigable waterways along the Texas coast. The coastal program's dredging policy reduces the adverse effects of dredging projects and encourages the beneficial use of dredged material for beach nourishment and the creation of coastal wetlands. Through the Texas Coastal Management Program, the Council coordinates the application of state programs and resources to address these and other coastal issues.

The Council's permitting assistance office, located in Corpus Christi, assists permit applicants by providing technical assistance on project design, the coordination of interagency pre-application meetings and the tracking of applications through permitting process.

Proposed Texas National Estuarine Research Reserve

The Western Gulf Biogeographic Region (Galveston to Mexico), in which Texas is located, is currently unrepresented in the National Estuarine Research Reserve System Biogeographic Classification Scheme. In September 2001, Governor Rick Perry submitted a nomination and request for financial assistance to begin the site selection process for the first National Estuarine Research Reserve in Texas. The Governor identified the University of Texas at Austin, Marine Science Institute in Port Aransas as the lead agency with oversight from the Texas General Land Office.

In 2002, Texas initiated the site selection process. The University of Texas at Austin, Marine Science Institute convened a Site Selection Committee and a Site Evaluation Subcommittee for the proposed Texas Reserve. After applying site selection criteria, the committees have recommended the Mission-Aransas Estuary as the physical location for the proposed reserve of more than 233,000 acres.

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

The Texas Coastal Management Program Grants program awards over 90 percent of its CZMA (Section 306 and Section 306A) funds to local entities for programs or projects that implement the goals and policies of the coastal program. In the first five grant cycles, over \$8.5 million was awarded to coastal entities for 146 projects within the coastal zone of Texas.